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THE REDEMPTION of Time,

OR

A Sermon contayning verie good remedies for them that haue miſſpent their time: Shewing how they ſhould redeeme it comfortably.

By *M. W.* Maſter in Arts.

Samuel Zanchie

PSAL. 90. 12.

Lord teach vs to number our daies, that wee may apply our hearts vnto wiſedome.

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Superest quod ſupra: est:

BRITISH
MUSEUM

Epheſ. 5. 16.
Redeeme the time, becauſe the dayes are euill.

WHileſt I bethought my ſelfe of a portion of holy writ to treate on, that might hold ſome agreement with the preſent ſeaſon: this ſhort ſentence offred it ſelfe vnto my minde. At the firſt I reiected it as impertinent, but after a ſecond and more ſerious view, me thought it was the moſt fit Scripture that I could make choice of on this occaſion. For howbeit, it hath pleaſed the common ſort of men, to ſtile theſe feſtiuall daies with the name of good times: yet by reaſon of the groſe abuſage, to which the corruption of men hath made them ſubiect, they may very well receiue an alteration of their title, and in a quite contrary phraſe be termed euill daies, yea,

and (that in the higheſt degree of all) the worſt of dayes. Now in this time wherein time is ſo lauiſhly miſ-ſpent, I hope it cannot ſeeme vnconuenient, or vntimely, to giue a briefe exhortation concerning the right vſe of Time.

Theſe words which I haue read, lead vs into that path: being part of an exhortation begun in the former verſe. There in generall, hee had exhorted them to bee moſt ſtrictly carefull of their wayes, and to direct their courſe of life in ſuch reſpectiue ſort, as they might deſerue the name of wiſe, not vnwiſe men: commending herein vnto them and vs, that very ſtrictneſſe and preciſeneſſe wherewith the world hath now long ſince pickt a quarrell and falne out. And beecauſe this was but a generall rule, hee ſeconds it with ſome particulars, by which wee may bee led on to the like inſtances in other matters. The firſt of theſe ſpecials is placed in the well diſpoſing of time, in this verſe: Where, hauing ſet downe the duety of Chriſtians in this behalfe, hee backs it with a reaſon; which in it ſelfe

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and to a ſpirituall vnderſtanding, is moſt ſound and firme, but to the carnall iudgement of a carnall man, is void of all ſoundneſſe and reaſon. The dutie is, to buy out the time, to traffique with it, as men do with wares, and when it is in other mens hands (as I may ſay) to giue ſomething (yea any thing) that we may get it into our owne hands, for good vſes: Hee meanes that wee ſhould vſe our greateſt care and diligence (euen that, which wee would imploy in matters moſt nearely concerning vs) to win all the time wee poſsibly can, for the duties of Religion and Godlineſſe. His argument to confirme this exhortation, is taken from the contrary, (if wee looke on it with a carnall eye, it will ſeeme inconſequent, halting and not able to beare vp the concluſion) It is, *becauſe the dayes are euill:* That is, the cuſtomes and manners of the greateſt part of men that liue, are wicked and lewde. Now beecauſe the number and route of the world is ſo ſtrongly bent to all manner of vngodlineſſe, as that they haue euen tainted the time it ſelfe,

and corrupted the very dayes; the Apoſtle would therefore haue the Epheſians, and all other Chriſtians, ſo much the more induſtrious, to take all ſeaſons and occaſions for the bettering of themſelues. Beecauſe other men are naught and ſtarke naught, therefore ought faithfull Chriſtians to bee good, and very good, and to turne all opportunities to this end and vſe, that they may bee furtherances to make them good.

The world would haue framed a more crooked concluſion from this ground, and haue ſaid: becauſe men are ſo generally and extreamely bad, (for that is noted in ſaying: *the dayes are euill*) wee muſt therefore needes ſtraine curteſie a little, and not bee too ſtrict, leaſt we ſhould be ouermuch different from other men, and incurre the by-name of Singulariſts. But the Apoſtle tels vs, that becauſe the waies of men are exceſsiuely diſordered & full of naughtineſſe, wee ſhould beſtow ſo much the more paines, that wee might not be caried downe the violent ſtreame and deluge

luge of vnſanctified liuing, & vnto this intent ſhould earneſtly watch and diligently take all good occaſions of getting and doing good. You ſee in part the meaning of this ſhort ſentence which containeth a few words indeede, but is ſtuft full of worthy matter, which (according as my weakneſſe can attaine) I ſhall ſtriue to ſpread beefore your eyes, vnfolding it in ſuch manner as that you may perceiue the things that lay therein cloſely wrapped vp before.

The point which the words offer to our conſideration at the firſt ſight, is this, that all Chriſtians ought to be very good husbands for their time. Good houres and opportunities are marchandize of the higheſt rate and price: and whoſoeuer will haue his ſoule thriue, muſt not ſuffer any of theſe bargains of time to paſſe him, but muſt buy vp, and buy out, all the minutes therof. No man of trade can be more carefull to chaffer & deale in the moſt gainfull things that pertaine to his occupation, then we ſhould be to deale in this ware of time, wherein euery Chriſtian is or ſhould

Doctrine.

be a well taught, and practiſed dealer. As ſuch kinde of men (if they can eyther make money themſelues, or borrow it of their friends, yea or elſe (ſuch is the greedineſſe of men) take it vp of the Vſurer) will not let ſlip any commoditie, wherein they haue skill, and are perſwaded, that it wil bring in large profit within a ſhort time of returne: ſo ſhould euery good man vſe all diligence (for diligence is in ſtead of mony here, and care in ſtead of coine) to gain euery day, euery houre, and euery minute (ſo much as may be poſsible) from al vnprofitable actions, & ouer-worldly affaires, to beeſtow the ſame on the duties of Religon and godlineſſe. This being ſuch a parcell of ware, as if it bee wiſely beſtowed, when it is heedefully gotten, will come in againe with both hands full of profit for recompence of ones paines taken in that behalfe. This ſelfe ſame exhortation, this ſame Apoſtle deliuers in ſo many words vnto the Colloſsians, when he ſaith: *walk wiſely towards them that are without, and redeeme the time.* See how *Paul*, an old, beaten,

Col. 4. 5.

beaten, and experienced dealer in theſe matters for the ſoule, doth neither forget, nor neglect to teach his apprentiſes (as I may call them) the very ſecrets & miſteries of the trade of good liuing, wherof this is one, euen the thriftie laying out, and getting in of time: which being repeted to the Colloſsians (as wel as deliuered to theſe Epheſians) comes with a double charge vpon our minds, to make vs heedfull in theſe bargaines. And that excellent petition of *Moſes* the man of God, doth meane nothing elſe but this, when in other words hee ſaith: *Teach me ſo to number my dayes* Pſa. 90. 12. *that I may apply my heart to wiſedome.* For he meanes that God would inable him with grace, ſo ſereouſly to conſider of the ſhortnes of this life, and the tranſitorineſſe of this preſent world; as that he might take all occaſions, and vſe all meanes to bend his heart to the ſeeking and obtaining of the true knowledge of God and himſelfe, and ſo the true feare of God, which is the beginning of wiſdom. And the want of this husbandry Chriſt doth mournfully lament in the

citie of Ieruſalem, ſetting out vnto vs alſo, the grieuous and diſmall effects and conſequents of this heedleſneſſe, in regard of taking time, and vſing the fit opportunitie. *O* (ſaith hee) *if thou hadſt euen knowne, at the leaſt in this thy day, thoſe things that pertaine vnto thy peace, But now are they hid from thine eyes, &c. q d.* Hitherto thou haſt had the meanes to learne what made for thy good, and what might haue preuented thy ruine; and if thou haddeſt but euen at this laſt houre marked and conſidered them, thou mighteſt haue eſcaped theſe fearefull iudgements: but now that thou haſt beene all this while wanting to God, he will hereafter bee wanting to thee, thou ſhalt neuer haue any true knowledge of theſe things, nor euer auoid theſe miſerable calamities. Becauſe they did not vſe time whilſt time did ſerue, to repent and turne to God, therefore after it was too late God would not heare them, nor helpe them. They that refuſe the good offer of a good bargaine from God, ſhal not haue this bargaine offred againe at their pleaſure: yea, God will not

Luk. 19. 42

not deale with them at their leasure, that would not deale with him at his leasure. And wisdome in *Salomons* wise booke of Prouerbs speakes to this effect of vngodly men, that when their misery comes, shee will laugh at them, beecause when shee gaue her good instructions to preuent this misery, they laughed at her. Prou. 1. 24. 25, 26.

The neglect of taking the fit time and occasion to follow wisdomes holesome counsel & to come when she cals: plũgeth scornful men into such a depth of misery, as that there is no meanes of recouery. For when wisdome laughes a man to scorne, whither shall he repaire for succour? And to this intent (of husbanding our time well) notable is the saying of the same Apostle in an other place, bidding vs, *whilst we haue time, do good to all.* As much as if he had told vs: that time must so much the rather bee bestowed in doing good (& then it is redeemed) becausе we haue no such great store of it, as we do foolishly imagine. The vessel of time is not so full (as most men dreame) nay it will soone come to Gal. 6. 10.

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the bottome. It is then wiſdome to ſpare betime, and not in the very dregs and lees. All theſe places do in moſt plaine manner confirme the point, *viz.* that euery good Chriſtian muſt be very ſauing and thrifty of his time, that is, muſt conuert all occaſions to the good of his ſoule, and furthering of his reckoning, not ſuffering by his will any houre, or minute (more then needs muſt) to bee layd out in any thing, but matters that may fit him for a better life. This is in truth to haue ones conuerſation in heauen, when one vpon the leaſt occaſion is ready to make one ſtep further thithertwards: when one giues all his time to God, but ſo much as may be more eſpecially to religious exerciſes, and ſuch things as doe after a peculiar ſort make for a better life, not letting ſlip any meanes of furtherance that is offered him this way.

Now for your better direction in this ſauing thrift, and for the more full vnderſtanding of this point, and more eaſie practiſing of this needefull dutie, I purpoſe to ſtand ſome while in ſhew-

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ing theſe two things. Firſt, from what time is to be redeemed. Secondly, what the time is which muſt be redeemed.

For the firſt, we muſt vnderſtand, that ther be fiue huckſters of time, very cormorants and ingroſers of this precious ware, which betwixt them (for the moſt part) get vp al the houres of mens liues, not ſuffring the ſoule to inioy ſo much as an houre for it own vſe, vpon the beſt occaſion to benefit it ſelf. Theſe theeues, when I haue told you their names, I will diſcribe more at large. They bee: Firſt, vaine ſports: Secondly, vaine ſpeeches: Thirdly, immoderate ſleeping or ſluggiſhnes: Fourthly, vaine thoughts: Laſtly, immoderate following of worldly buſineſſes and affaires, Play, Twatling, Sleeping, fooliſh thinking, exceſſiue rooting in the earth. Now for theſe fond ſports (amongſt which I comprehend riotous feaſting and belly-cheare, a companion of gameing for the moſt part, and alſo that triffling, & womanniſh diſeaſe of curiouſneſſe in putting on apparrell) for theſe, I ſay, it is eaſie to proue that they do eat vp theſe good houres,

houres, which otherwiſe would much inrich the ſoule of man. *Salomon* the wiſeſt of meer men that liued ſince *Adam*, hath ſet it downe as a ſure rule (that neuer failes, ſcarce euer admits exception)

Pro. 21. 17 *That hee which loues paſtime ſhall bee poore, and he that loues wine and oile ſhall not be rich.* If this ſaying be vnderſtood onely of the body it is moſt true. For theſe things will make a man extreamly needy in the midſt of large poſſeſsions, and plentious reuenues. But if wee apply it to the ſoule (as I ſee not cauſe why it may not be applyed to both) it is moſt vniuerſally true. Hee that is ſo wedded to his pleaſures, and beſotted vpon vaine delights, as that the current of his life is carried that way, or elſe too great a part of the ſtreame is turned thither; ſhall bee deſtitute of vnderſtanding, ſhall haue a naked, ragged, tottred ſoule; and that comes becauſe hee hath not vſed his time well, by the right imployment whereof hee might haue got wealth for his better part, I meane vnto his mind and hart. A thread-bare heart needy of knowledge comes from a voluptuous

luptuous life ſtuffed with pleaſures. and the Prophet *Iſaiah* cries out with a wofull and a bitter cry againſt thoſe which had the Timbrell, the Pipe, and the Harp in their feaſt, but would not regard the work of the Lord. All their dayes were taken vp in eating & drinking, in banqueting and feaſting, in good cheer and merry making. So that there was no time to meditate and thinke on thoſe afflictions wherby God did warn them to repentance and amendement, which is moſt contrary to this dutie of redeeming the time, for all this time is euen loſt and caſt away. And had we no other proofe then our owne experience in this behalfe, would it not manifeſtly conuince, that he which deſires to redeeme the time, muſt fly theſe vain delights & ſports? For do we not plainly ſee what a canker it is in a number of mens liues, when many dayes they beſtow three or foure houres together, yea, halfe the day if not the whole in dicing, carding, bowling, ſhoueli-bord, or the like idle (if not wicked) exerſes? doth not this waſt and poure forth Iſai, 5. 12.

time

time ouer lauiſhly ? Or can that man haue ſo much reſt and quiet, or ſo much fitnes & opportunitie to do good to his ſoule, as his wiſe care in cutting off theſe needleſſe recreations (or vexations rather) would haue afforded him ? For theſe vaine pleaſures are not alone miſcheeuous hinderers of this thrift, in that they conſume the very houres themſelues; but as much, or more alſo in that they diſſettle the heart, and pull the affections out of ioynt, ſo that a man is driuen to take as much paines to ſet his heart to a good exercife, as would well haue diſpatched the duty, had hee not beene thus vnfitted. Now what a miſerable loſſe is it when a man is robbed of his time, and of his heart both at once ? And by both kept from reading, praying, meditating, examining his heart, or any ſuch good exercife for his ſoules aduantage. Whreforeif any man would ſo preuent theſe vaine & fooliſh ſports that they ſhould not ſpoile him of his heart and houres: let him obſerue theſe two rules in his ſports, and then he ſhall doe well in theſe reſpects.

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Firſt, (this being preſuppoſed that he doe not vſe any recreations, but thoſe which he can proue to be in themſelues lawfull) firſt, I ſay, for the beginning of recreation, let euery man know that recreation muſt follow labour, for the moſt part, or if at any time it goe before it, it muſt be very little, onely to fit one for labour. The Lord allowes a man no ſport, though neuer ſo lawfull in it ſelfe, vntill ſuch time as his body or mind do ſtand in neede of it, cheefly when they haue beene buſied in ſome ſuch honeſt affaires, as by wearying them, haue made them vnfit for further labour, ſo that they muſt againe be fitted thereto by recreation. Vntil paines-taking haue made the body or minde not ſo well able to take paines, there is no allowance ordinarily for recreation. Al our ſports & recreations, if we will vſe them well, (I ſpeake of thoſe which are lawfull) muſt bee to our body or minde, as the Mowers whet-ſtone or rifle is to his ſyth to ſharpen it when it growes dull. He that when his ſyth is dulled, wil not (vpon a deſire to doe more woorke)

take time to whet it, ſhall cut leſſe, and with more paine, & more vnhandſomely then he need to do: ſo he that when his body or mind is tired or heauy, will not vſe ſome honeſt refreſhing, ſhall doe leſſe, and with leſſe dexteritie then he might. But on the other ſide, if the mower ſhould doe nothing from morning to noone, or from noone to night but whet, whet, whet, rubbing his Syth, he would both marre the ſyth, and bee counted an idle woorke-man alſo, for looſing his dayes work: ſo he that will run after the moſt honeſt delights when neither the wearineſſe of his body, nor heauines of his mind requires the ſame, (but onely vpon a fond luſt or longing after them) ſhall in time deſtroy his wit, and ſtrength, and in the meane ſeaſon, maruailous vnthriftily miſ-ſpend his time. Therefore let not a man beginne the day with play, though neuer ſo lawfull, vnleſſe his body or minde require ſome neceſſary exerciſe to make it more apt for his calling. Hee that ſets into the day ſportingly, ſhall bee ſure to go through it, either lumpiſhly or ſinfully,

fully, much more if he ſpend all the day from morning to night in playing, let it bee neuer ſo much holy day, or haue he what other excuſe he will. This rule is for the beginning of ſports.

The ſecond is for the meaſure and continuance of them, where this is a generall and a firme direction: That it is not lawfull for a man in an ordinary courſe, to ſpend more time in any paſtime vpon any day, then in religious exerciſes, I meane cheefely priuate religious exercıſes, I ſay, it is vtterly vnlawfull to beſtow a larger time any day vpon the moſt lawfull delight, then in priuate religious exerciſes, or at leaſt in a cuſtomable courſe ſo to doe. This is plainely prooued by that which Chriſt ſpeakes to vs, ſaying: *Firſt, ſeeke the kingdome of God and the righteouſneſſe thereof.* You ſee here commaunded to prefer the ſeeking of heauen before any other thing whatſoeuer, to let that haue the cheefe place in our ſoules & in our liues. Now he that firſt ſeekes the kingdome of heauen, cannot beſtow more time in ſports of any ſort, then in thoſe Mat. 6.33.

things which doe directly make for the obtaining of eternall life, and that righteouſneſſe which will bring one thereunto, ſuch as are hearing and reading the Word, praying, meditating, examining the heart, conferring, and the like. And ſurely this is a moſt equall thing, that the moſt needful duty ſhould haue the moſt time beſtowed vpon it. Yea, & it is a moſt eaſie rule to all ſorts of men, that haue ſeaſoned their hearts with the true feare of God. For if a mans calling lye in bodily works, then the very exerciſes of Religion are a refreſhing to his body, in that hee doth for the ſpace while they continue deſiſt from his bodily labour (and his calling affords ſufficient ſtirring of the body for health) ſo that if hee be religiouſly minded, and haue indeed ſet his delight on God, he may wel giue as much time to theſe actions, as to any carnall ſports. But if any mans calling lye in ſtudy, or ſuch like labour of the minde, firſt, the change is a great refreſhing, and variety a delight; and then there bee religious exerciſes, which will refreſh the minde as well as

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any ſports, and for ſo much exerciſe as health requires, it is not long in vſing, becauſe nature is here, as in other matters content with a little, howſoeuer men ſeeke excuſes by bee-lying her: ſo that at the leaſt, an equall portion of time muſt be allotted to God, and religion, as to ſports and delights, euen of ſtudents, if they will firſt ſeek the kingdome of God. Therefore let a man meaſure out the time of ſporting, and recreating himſelfe, by the time he takes to pray, to read, to meditate, to ſing Pſalmes, to conferre of good things, or the like, and know that he hath not libertie from God to imploy ordinarilie ſo much time, neuer to imploy one minute more, in the moſt vnoffenſiue ſports, then in theſe ſeruices of God. Now let a man conforme himſelfe to theſe two rules. Begin not play till need of body or minde exact it. Continue not ſports longer then a man hath or ſhall continue ſome godly priuate exerciſe of religion, and he ſhall ſaue his time well from this firſt theefe.

Now comes to bee conſidered the

next ſpender or rather robber of time, that is, Idle twatling or babling. And concerning this our Sauiour Chriſt deales plainely with vs ſaying: *That of euery idle word which men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall giue account at the day of iudgement.* Mat.12.36. Think well of this ſentence and lay vp euery word. Thou muſt not alone giue account of thy workes, but alſo of thy words: thou muſt not onely bee called to a reckning for mouing of thy hand, foote or whole body, but of thy tongue alſo; & that not alone for wicked words, ſinfull words, harmeful words, ſpeeches in themſelues infectious and rotten; but for idle and waſt words; and not onely for a number of idle words, for a whole throng or fleete of them, but for euery idle word. Now then if there be an account to bee giuen, and a reckoning to bee made for theſe rubbiſh ſpeeches; iudge if it bee not a want of redeeming the time, to lay it out in ſuch a thing, as will bring a ſore and heauie burthen afterwards without repentance to caſt it off; & iudge if he which makes much of time, had not neede take much heed

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of this ill-ſpent breath. Not alone then wicked ſpeaking (when one belcheth forth lewd and filthy words) not ſlanderous and backbiting talke (when one whiſpers of his neighbours faults beehinde his backe, vttering perhaps alſo lying reports, and fathering that vpon him which he neuer did or meant) but euen vaine, needleſſe and vnprofitable woords (which tend to no good or wholeſome vſe for the ſoule or body) are a miſ-ſpending of time and contrary to this precept, and therefore alſo to bee ſhunned of him that is this way thriftily diſpoſed. No man can talke idlely, but he caſts himſelfe vpon a double damage, euen the loſſe of a word, and the loſſe of time: two great loſſes, what euer men imagine of them. And therefore the Apoſtle *Paul* alſo findes fault with a certaine ſort of women that were pratlers, which would goe from houſe to houſe twatling and babling out frothy ſpeech, that was good for nothing, which fault he condemnes as a matter ſomething worſe then idleneſſe, or doing nothing, when one talks toyes

or trifles, and ſpeakes ſhadowes or gawds that yeeld no profit. Such twatling cuts out the heart of good time, for it hath ſeldome any meaſure, it creepes by little and little ouer a great part of the day and ſometimes of the night. How many winter nights doe men ſuffer themſelues to be robbed of by this childiſh babling? And in the fourth verſe of this Chapter, the Apoſtle forbids fooliſh ſpeaking & ieſting. The one is a rouing diſcourſe, gathering together a great deale of chaffie geere that will feed no manʒa buſie but abſurd proſecuting of a heedleſſe and footeleſſe tale (as we may call it in our phraſe.) The other is a ſetting of ones ſelfe, and ſharpning of his wit, to coine pretty and wittie ſcoffes and conceits that may moue laughter, & for this end onely. Both theſe are condemned, as vnlawful, and vnbeſeeming Chriſtians. There muſt be a difference made betwixt a ſmooth and pleaſant vttering of ones mind in ſeemly phraſes, and good and delightfull termes and manner: And this whetting of the wit to bandy and

Eph. 5. 4.

and toſſe ſharpe and briniſh taunts and quirks.

Now this pleaſantneſſe of the moſt honeſt ſort is not to bee vſed as a cuſtome, but in the nature of a refreſhing, when men are dulled, for better matter. For laughter beeing a power of Gods creating, and wholeſome to the body, and therefore lawfull, it cannot bee vnlawfull in a ſeemely ſort, harmeleſly to mooue laughter by words, but it muſt not be ieſting, one muſt not giue himſelfe to it, and make it his occupation for an houre or two together. Now none can be ignorant how great a hinderance this vaine ſpeech is to the well imploying of time. For doe wee not ſee that in many places whole dayes are caſt away in the deepe gulfe of rouing, and vnprofitable runnagate babling to no purpoſe? And that whole meales are deuoured in gibing and ieſting, if without taking the ſacred name of God in vaine, and hurting ones brothers name (which is very ſeldome) yet exceſsiuely, and not without thruſting out better matter, which is a greeuous fault.

Wherefore that we may be well armed against this robber, let vs obserue diligently these two rules.

First, let vs make conscience of our words, & of the mouing of our tongue, knowing it to be a necessary duty that God hath imposed vpon vs to haue our words alwaies gracious, and seasoned with salt alwaies good for the matter, and tempered with wisedome for the manner. Which precept the Apostle ads presently after this, of redeeming the time (to the Collossians) as a notable part of it. The Law of grace then, must bee the bridle of our tongue, and wisedome must raigne in our mouthes, so that wee speake nothing but that which may bee for some profit, to our owne or others soule or body, being fitly tempered to the present circumstances of time, place, &c. where and when we speake. For the words are gracious, not alone when they tend to the further edification of the Soule in some matter of religion, but also when they bee busied about ones honest outward affaires and lawfull calling, this being a great

Col. 4. 5.

great furtherance to Godlineſſe that a man know how (and accordingly practiſe it) to follow his calling with dexteritie and wiſedome. Now he that would not haue vnneceſſarie trifling woords ſteale into his hart & out of his mouth, and ſo ſpoile him of good ſeaſons muſt ſet it downe as a thing to which his conſcience is bound (as well as not to lye, ſweare or ſlander) not to ſpeak one word, whereof hee cannot giue ſome reaſon from the good that he doth aime at in ſpeaking of it. And euery man muſt know that hauing let ſlip ſuch a word, he hath committed ſuch a ſin, as makes him liable to Gods iudgement, and to the ſentence of condemnation. The want of reſoluing the heart thus, cauſeth many to take liberty to their tongues, (and harmefull libertie it is,) and yet to thincke they haue done no harme to themſelues in ſo doing. And therefore the common excuſe of ſuch twatlers is this: I hope that it is no harme: yea, but what good was it? If it were not directed to ſome good, it hath done harme, for it hath broken Gods

commandement & ſet thy ſelfe deeper in debt then thou was before, thou haſt one treſpaſſe more to anſwere for before Gods tribunall, no man ſhall euer auoid this puddle, that will not be perſwaded it is a damnable ſin to ſtep into it. Firſt, then labour to conuince thine heart, and frame thy practiſe to this rule in all ſpeaking.

Secondly, for honeſt comely mirth in ſpeech, (beſides that it muſt not reliſh of luſt, nor ſauour of mallice and profaneneſſe, for then it is worſe then idle words) it ought to bee bounded with this rule, namely, that it bee vſed as a meanes to quicken our ſelues or others againſt ſome naturall heauines or deadneſſe, by which the heart is made vnapt for better conference and other exerciſes of more profitable vſe; and when this effect is brought to paſſe, that laughter hath ſcattered the miſt of dulneſſe from of the heart and minde (or if no ſuch occaſion bee offred) then let mirth and naturall laughter, giue place to his betters, otherwiſe comming into a continued cuſtome and ſhouldring

out

out more needefull communication, that takes the name and nature of ieſting, and is a thing much vnbeſeeming the ſtaidneſſe of a Chriſtian. Thus the tongue may bee bound from dealing falſely with the heart, and couſening the ſoule of good houres and occaſions.

Now followes the third deuourer of time, & that is immoderate ſleeping or ſluggiſhneſſe. The wiſe king *Salomon*, bare a great hatred to this theefe, and giues many warnings & caueats wherby men might learne to take heed of it. The bed is as a very cunning and ſlye couſenour, that vſeth a pleaſing tricke to deceiue a man, and robs him vnder ſhew of friendſhip. Now *Salomon* hath made a moſt fit deſcriptiõ of a ſluggard caught by the wiles of ſleep and ſloth, ſetting him out to the life. *Prou.6.9.10.* Prou.6.9. 10,11. 11. Where hee brings him in roming himſelfe, and rubbing his eyes with an vnwilling hand, vttering broken and ſleepy ſentences, as one not halfe awake. Firſt, hee cals him vp (as it were) ſaying: *How long wilt thou ſleepe, when wilt*

wilt thou riſe out of thy ſleepe? As if he had ſaid: Ho, ſir, it is time to get vp, what, not out of your bed yet, at this time of the day? Then mark the drowſie, ſlumbring, and ſenceleſſe anſwere: *A liitle ſleepes, a little ſlumbers.* (For the originall hath the words in the plurall number, well befitting a ſluggard) *a little folding of the hands to ſleepe.* See, how ſpeaking of ſleep all is in the litles. And though he names ſleepes, yet it is but a little in his conceit. Hee tels not when he will riſe, but hee cannot riſe yet, and when he hath had enough, & too much already, then he muſt haue a little more, begging for ſleepe as one would begge for bread. He askes a little, becauſe he would not bee denied. Firſt, hee muſt haue ſleepes, and hauing ſlept, he muſt haue ſlumbers, and hauing ſlumbred, he muſt fold his hands, and rome and tumble himſelfe. Behold a ſleeper in his colours: And mark what anſwere *Salomon* giues, hee ſpends no more time to call him vp, but tels him his doome as he lyes in his bed. *Therefore thy powertie comes as a trauailer, and thy neceſſitie*

as

as an armed man. As if he had ſaid: well, be it ſo, if you will needs, ſleepe on, take your belly-full of ſleepe, but know that ſith you ſhew ſuch skill in begging ſleepe, you ſhall euen become a begger for it, ſith you will haue your fill of ſleepe, you ſhall haue little enough of any wealth, pouerty will purſue you, and ouertake you, it will follow you, and ſurpriſe you, it will make haſt and ſtrike home, you cannot runne from it, nor reſiſt it, it comes with ſpeede and with force, it will take you in bed where you cannot flee away from it, nor driue it from you. And what he ſaith of outward pouerty, is moſt certaine of inward penury. A ſluggard hath ſo much the leſſe grace, by how much hee hath the more ſleepes and ſlumbers. So the ſame wiſe king hath ſet out a ſluggard in an other place ſaying: That a ſluggard tumbles himſelfe on his bed, as the doore on the hinges. That is, hee is ſtill there, and there muſt bee ſuch adoe before hee can bee remoued from off his cowch, as if one were to lift a doore off the hookes, a man muſt come with leauers Pro. 16. 14.

uers to heaue him off. Call him, waken him, bid him riſe, &c. All is little enough to reare him. This ſluggiſh humour (you ſee) is condemned long ago for a miſ-ſpender of time. And ſurely it is not alone very dangerous in regard of the quantitie, and muchneſſe of the time which it filcheth, but alſo in regard of the qualitie and goodneſſe. For it ordinarily feedes gluttonouſly on the very fat of time, it eates the very floure of the day, and conſumes the firſt fruits of our houres: euen the morning ſeaſon. After ſleepe hath made ſtrong what labour hath weakned, after that nature hath beene well refreſhed, & the reuiued ſpirits come with a freſh ſupply of ſtrength and nimbleneſſe to ſerue the body and the minde: then for want of exerciſe all growes dul againe, as a band of Souldiers that growe effeminate by lying in garriſon without labour, all the ſummer. Thus it robs one of the principall and moſt ſeaſonable time when the minde and body were both in the greateſt fitnes to read, pray, meditate, or to diſpatch and caſt any matter

matter of ones calling, it is a theefe that robs one, not of his baggage ſtuffe, but euen of his gold and Iewels. (For ſome time is better then other, as much as ſome mettall is better then others, and this alwayes for the moſt part takes away the moſt precious) yea, it hath one trick as much & more dangerous then the former. If a man giue himſelfe to ſluggiſhneſſe, it will often follow him to Church, and cloſe vp his eyes and eares, both of body and minde from hearing & marking thoſe moſt wholeſome exhortations, comforts, reproofes and inſtructions, which like ſo many pearles, Gods meſſenger with a liberall hand according to the pleaſure of his Lord, doth ſcater amongſt men, that who ſo will may take them vp. The time of preaching and expounding the word with applying it, is the time of harueſt, it is Gods market day, nay, it is his dole or princely congie. when hee giues gifts freely, and thoſe of great worth too, vnto thoſe that will take them. How can it chooſe but be a great hinderance to a mans eſtate to ſleepe

in harueſt, and to bee in bed at ſuch a time when ſo much wealth is beſtowing. Therefore this ſleepe, you ſee, is a moſt craftie and pernitious deceiuer, and doth with much cunning ouerreach a man, taking from him for the moſt part the morning time, and the time of hearing, two the moſt profitable ſeaſons, and the moſt worthy to bee redeemed of all others. Now againſt the deceit of this falſe companion, a man may defend himſelfe by following theſe two rules.

Firſt, it is not lawfull for any man vpon pretence of leaſure from buſineſſe to take more ſleepe then is required for the ſtrengthning and refreſhing of his nature. The meaſure of ones ſleepe or lying in bed muſt not be according to ones buſineſſe, but ſo much as his nature requires, for the better enabling of it to performe the duties of his calling and of religion. In deed a man may and ought to breake his ſleepe, and ſtinte himſelfe in this regard when important buſineſſe, eyther for the ſoule or body doe preſſe vpon him, but no man muſt take

take more ſleepe then is requiſite for the ſufficient refreſhing of nature vpon vacation of neceſſary affaires. The reaſon of this is plaine. It is a ſin to ſtraine and ſtretch naturall things for the ſeruing of luſt, beyond that end for which they were created and ordained. Now ſleepe and lying in bed was ordayned for the ſtrengthning of nature, and for the repayring of the ſpirits diminiſhed by labour, wherefore it muſt not bee drawen beyond this end to the ſatisfiing of a ſluggiſh humour. So that as it were a fault for a man to fit, and cram himſelfe with meate, till his ſtomacke would turne back the morcels, becauſe no buſines did call him from the table: ſo it is a ſinne to giue ones ſelfe to immoderate ſleeping or ſlugging in bed, (as our word is, to ſleepe compaſſe) becauſe no vrgent matter doth call him vp. This is to bee on the bed as a doore on the hinges, that one cannot riſe till a leauer come; that is, ſomething euen almoſt of neceſsitie. It is wicked to ſurphet on ſleepe as well as on meate. So then it ſhall bee a great helpe againſt

ſluggiſhneſſe, to know that God allowes not any man to bee ſluggiſh, and therefore to accuſtome ones ſelfe to timely riſing. For in this one thing, cuſtome hath as much power almoſt as in any thing, ſo that looke what is ones vſe, that hee ſhall hardly refraine. Hee that doth cuſtomably forſake his bed ſo ſoone as hee feeles his nature freſh, and his ſpirits quickned, ſhall with eaſe keepe on in ſo doing. But he that takes libertie to laze himſelfe, and dull his ſpirits for lacke of vſe, ſhall finde the more hee ſleepes, the more he ſhall bee drowſie, till he become a very ſlaue to his bed, and make ſleepe his maſter. So a healthfull body by confeſsing it to be his duetie, & (through cuſtome though hard at firſt) drawing it vnto a nature may haue the morning at commaund. And this is the firſt rule.

Secondly, for the time of hearing the word, hee that would not bee troubled with ſuch ſluggiſhnes then muſt looke that hee doe vſe meate, and drinke, and ſleepe moderately in the firſt ſeaſon of it, and then ſtriue to quicken himſefe againſt

againſt carnall heauineſſe and ſorrow, by prayer and meditation before hand, which two things will keep a healthfull body in ſuch good temper, that ſleepe ſhall not ordinarily oppreſſe it in this moſt ſacred exerciſe.

Now followes the fourth theefe to bee araigned, and that is idle thoughts. Mans imaginations will bee working, and toſsing conceits vp and downe almoſt continually. Now all men by nature are ſo tainted with the ſickneſſe of vanitie that their minde will runne willingly after nothing elſe but that which vanitie begets. And for this cauſe men haue taken vp a prouerbe, to dazle their eyes, (if it might bee) that this might not ſeem a fault. They ſay, that thought is free, as though one ſhould neuer anſwere for idle thoughts. And it is the common excuſe of men to ſay, they thincke no harme, as though it were enough, to hatch no miſchieuous and harmefull conceites, notwithſtanding they doe exceed in idle and vnprofitable imaginations. Whereby it may bee ſeene that men are ſo farre from refor-

ming this fault, and auoiding this theef, that they will not take it for a fault, nor eſteeme it as a theeſe of time. But this ſwallowes vp moſt of our ſolitarie houres when men are in bed, or alone in the night ſeaſon, and cannot ſleepe, or when they be iourneying and walking without company, they cannot then poſsibly talke with others when no man is preſent. Yet their mind doth buſie it ſelfe in idle talking with it ſelfe, caſting a thouſand fond things before ones eyes, as what if this ſhould bee, or what if that ſhould come to paſſe, and much adoe to little purpoſe. This rouing and friſking of the phantaſie, like a wanton calfe let looſe from the ſtall, is a frotting worme that eats out a great deale of moſt mens time, ſo that they cannot redeeme it, for the profit of their hearts. This puts by good meditations, and ſuggeſts fethery light ſtuffe that hath no good ſubſtance in it, froth and foame which is not nouriſhment to the minde, but rather poyſon, in that it fils it full of winde. And a windy heart is no leſſe burdenſome then a windy ſtomack,

macke. This caſts out the cogitation of Gods benefits that one may not bee thankfull for them; it ſhoulders away the thought of ones owne ſinnes, that hee may not renew his Godly ſorrow and repentance for them. It iuſſels out the conſideration of Gods graces, that wee cannot ſet our affections on fire to long and labour afrer them. And in all theſe reſpects it takes away the benefit of much good opportunitie. For euery time a man is alone ſeperated from all company and outward buſineſſe, there is an excellent occaſion of furthering his owne ſoule offred vnto him. If any thing grieue him, hee may freely disburden his heart into Gods boſome. If he faulted any way hee may haue full & free ſcope to confeſſe and bewaile it, if hee want any good thing, there is leaſure & place as in effectuall manner, and with as many words as one can to beg it of the Lord. Thus great riches might come to the ſoule by a well-ſpent ſolitarineſſe. But vaine cogitations doe deprive a man of all this, and doe ſo blow vp the mind with that

which is nothing, as it growes ſwolne, like the fleſh of him which hath the dropſie, ſo that it may well bee called the dropſie of the minde. Now a help againſt this vanitie of the minde breaking forth in idle thoughts and fancies;

Prou.4.23. Firſt, wee muſt take the counſell of *Salomon, to keepe the heart with all diligence.* The heart is that which muſt be narrowly looked vnto, that euill and vnprofitable thoughts riſe not vp in it. Here muſt be the ſpeciall care to preuent firſt breeding and ingendring of ſinne in the moſt inward parts.

This theefe will be ſtill filching and ſtealing time continually, doe what one can. Wherefore a watchfull and wary eye muſt bee had thereunto, and a diligent garde muſt be ſet before the heart, to keepe out ſuch imaginations from entring, as be like rogues and vagrants worth nothing, and alwaies come to ſteale ſomething. When a man makes conſcience of his thoughts, & obſerues them to what end they tend, this will bee an excellent helpe to keepe them from wandring, whereas if one will follow

low the prouerbe, and eſteeme them as free, they will neuer bee kept from a buſie fondneſſe, like Ants in a mole-hill, that runne vp and downe hither and thither, and doe nothing.

Then in the ſecond place wee muſt labour to bee prouided before hand of ſome profitable matter or ſubiect, whereunto to bend the thoughts in ſolitarineſſe. Something that tends to the glory of God, and our owne good, eyther in matters of the ſoule, or the lawfull affaires of the body, muſt be let into the ſoule to take vp the roome, and the buſie fancies may bee the better ſtopt out. And indeed the Lord hath prouided a Chriſtian of good ſtore of ſuch matter, if hee bee not wanting to himſelfe. For there is nothing that offers it ſelfe to any of our ſences, which doth not alſo offer to our minde (if it were not ſtarke blinde) ſome glorious attribute of God to bee ſeene and conſidered of. So that to want occaſion of good thoughts in this varietie of matter, is to want light at noonetide, that proceeds from nothing but from want

of eyes. But this is a great help to him that can ſee to ſet his ſoule a work firſt on the good things. For if one haue let his heart looſe at firſt, he ſhal not (without much paines and toyle) catch it againe, and haue it within commaund. Thus doing, a great part of vaine cogitations ſhall bee cut off.

Now comes to bee handled the fift and worſt of all the fiue conſumers of time, which is ſo much the more dangerous, becauſe it is in ſome honeſt reckning among moſt men, and is eſteemed as the right Lord and true owner of that time which for the moſt part it holds by vſurpation and iniury. This is the immoderate care of the world, & of things of this life, though in themſelues honeſt and lawfull, when a man doth winde himſelfe into ſuch a laborinth and maze of affaires, as hee can not get out at fit times to ſpirituall and religious dueties, at leaſt not to thoſe which are priuate, when the heart is ſo ſurcharged with bargaines, and purchaſes, and buying, and ſelling, & building, and ſuch like, that God and goodneſſe,

Chriſt

Chriſt and Saluation, Heauen and hell come not into a mans minde once in a day, ſcarce once in a weeke, or at leaſt, if they come, they bee quickly ſhut out, and haue no long, nor quiet entertainement there, when the ſoule is ouerwhelmed with caring, thincking, deuiſing, and ſtriuing how to grow great here, and is ſo toſſed in the gulfe of earthly matters, that it cannot come to land (as it were) to ſettle it ſelfe in any proportion to think how it may grow great in heauen, and how it may get poſſeſsion of the true treaſure. This is a wonderous conſumer of good houres, digging them all into the dunghill of this world. Chriſt findes fault with this in the parable. Mat. 22.

The men bidden to the Feaſt had farmes, and Oxen, and wiues, and ſuch matters in hand (buſineſſe forſooth of more importance then ſo) and therfore could not come. Mar. 13. And the thornie ground had ſo much carking and caring, how to liue, that it doth euen choak the Word, the good ſeede could not grow therby. And the Lord complains of

Hag.1.23. of them of the captiuitie of Iudah, that they could find time to build their owne houſes, yea, and to ſeele them too, but, they ſaid, it was not time to build the houſe of God. So this ſinne doth ingroſe all the time to it ſelfe, and will not giue elbow roome to any good exerciſe, eſpecially to any priuate exerciſes, without which the publike are but as meate without digeſtion. And yet it comes like an honeſt and approueable thing, painted with the name of thriftineſſe and paines in ones lawfull calling. To fence our ſelues againſt this rauenous and lurking fault, wee muſt binde our ſelues to theſe three rules, which all depend vpon the rule of Mat. 6.33. Chriſt, that bids vs firſt ſeeke the kingdome of God, firſt, in time, and firſt in 20. ver. affection. And againe. *Lay vp your treaſure in heauen.* Hence I ſay, three rules may bee collected, to which hee that would not bee ſpoyled of good occaſions to the ſoule by worldlineſſe, muſt more and more frame himſelfe and his life.

The firſt is, that no man ſuffer himſelfe

ſelfe to enter vpon ſo many buſineſſes, or any ſo egerly, as that his ordinary affaires ſhould hinder himſelfe or his family from the performance of ordinary religious exerciſes.

The common and daily matters of this world in any mans calling whatſoeuer, ſhould not draw him or his familie from common and daily duties of religion, ſuch are reading, praying, meditating, & religious obſeruing of the Sabboth. For here a man muſt take care for his houſhold as well as for himſelfe, that he do not hinder them from taking conuenient time to pray, & read, &c. by forcing vpon them an ouer great burthen of ordinary buſines. For if the ſoule be to be preferred before the body, & heauen before earth, then thoſe cuſtomable matters that pertain to the ſauing of the ſoule muſt be ſet before, much more ſtand equall with the things that pertaine to the body. Secondly, the extraordinary workes of our calling, (if any fall out) muſt not barre vs from the extraordinary works of Religion. As for example, harueſt and hay-time or the like

like, are extraordinary times for the buſineſſe for the body: ſo preparation to the Sacrament, faſting, (if need ſo require) and ſuch like, are extraordinary works for the ſoule. Now the care of inning ones corne or graſſe muſt not keep him from taking time to prepare himſelfe, to the Sacrament, or to faſt at his need. So the receiuing of the Lords ſupper is matter of more then ordinary vſe for the ſoule, and ſome needfull iourny ſtands in the like manner for the body. But a man muſt rather deferre his iourny (if it may bee put of without ouermuch hinderance to him) then omit the receiuing of the Lords Supper. The ſame rule muſt be kept in in all other particulars. For if the ſoule bee more worth, & muſt be more carefully attēded on thē the body (as it is no reaſon the hand-maide ſhould take place of the miſtriſſe) then thoſe things which doe after a peculiar manner concerne the good and profit thereof, muſt not bee neglected for ſuch as doe more ſpecially helpe the ſtate of the body outwardly. Laſtly, if ſome outward dutie of religion

ligion haue beene put off from the time wherin it ſhould be performed by ſome ſuddaine and vnexpected buſines that required ſuch haſt (as in ſuch caſe ordinary duties of religion may be deferred) then ſome ordinary buſineſſe of leſſe waight muſt in recompence giue place to that exerciſe afterwards, and a man muſt finde time for that, whether it be reading, praying, or meditating, by leauing vndone (for that ſpace) ſomething that may be better ſpared. And thus you haue heard what be thoſe ſpeciall euils which lye in waite to couſin vs of our good time, & how they may be preuented. And ſo ỹ firſt part is hādled, namely, from what time is to be redeemed.

Now follows to ſhew what it is that is to be redeemed, and ſo you ſhall fully know wherein this duety conſiſts. Now by time the Apoſtle meanes two things First, the very paſsing away of houres and minutes, the ſpace and leaſure of any thing. And ſecondly, the good occaſions or oportunities, that fal out in this ſpace. For the word in the originall ſignifies not alone the very

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ſliding of minutes, but the ſpace conſidered alſo with ſome ſpeciall fitnes that it hath for ſome good, which we call the ſeaſon of it. Now for the firſt, it ſhal not be needfull to ſay any more, being that euery one knows, that euery thing muſt haue ſome ſpace wherein to bee done. And he that will auoid the fiue forenamed euils, ſhall neuer want time or the ſpace wherein to doe or get good. But for the occaſions & fit oportunities that fall out, now for this, now for that, in this ſpace, it is ſome more skill to finde them out and make vſe of them. Now theſe ſeaſons are all of two ſorts. Firſt, ſuch whereby a man may more eaſily get ſome good to himſelfe. Secondly, ſuch whereby a man may with more fitnes and eaſe doe ſome good. Of the firſt ſort, namely, ſeaſonable opportunities to get good, I will name three particulars which are moſt needfull to bee conſidered, and by proportion of which any man may come to the knowledge of other like. The firſt, when God continues the Goſpell, offring daylie the word and Sacraments, & calling to re-

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pentance and amendment of life. This is the ſeaſon of repenting, this is the harueſt wherein we may reape Chriſt; if we be not negligent. This is the acceptable yeere of the Lord, in which one ſhall bee receiued if he returne. Whileſt wiſdome lifts vp her voice, whileſt her meſſengers come dayly to inuite vs; whileſt her gates ſtand open, & her dinner ſtands ready dreſt, whileſt her meſſage is done vnto vs, all this time, if a man will ſtriue and endeuour to turne from his ſin, to leaue his folly, & forſake his ſcorning, hee ſhall bee a welcome gueſt, ſhe will accept him, help him, and giue him an increaſe of grace, till he bee become ſtrong with her meates. Whoſoeuer liues vnder the preaching of the Goſpell, hath this priuiledge annexed to the outward teaching, that if he will but ſtriue and pray to God to giue him ſtrength to repent and amend his waies and to turne to him, God will (vpon his promiſe) heare his prayers and aſsiſt him: but when the Goſpell is gone, then the date is paſt, a man may call, and not be heard: and cry, and not be regarded.

So then euery man redeemes this ſeaſon of the Goſpell, when he giues himſelfe to conſider ſereouſly of thoſe faults which he findes in himſelfe, and heares ſharpely reproued in the word, & hereupon reſolues to forſake them, & doth not onely his owne beſt endeuour, but earneſtly cals vpon God for his helpe, without which his power is but weakneſſe & ineffectuall; when he doth alſo duely ponder vpon the holy cõmandements that he heares preached, & thoſe exhortations that are dayly ſounded in his eares to moue him to do ſuch duties as god requires, & hereupon concludes with himſelfe to ſet about this worke, and craues the ſtrength of God to beare him through in the ſame. And when he doth aduiſedly thinke of the promiſes that are generally proclaimed, and labours to get ſome aſſurance that hee is ſuch a one to whom the right of theſe promiſes appertaine. Thus doing, I ſay, one redeemes the time wiſely, & makes his aduantage of the Goſpell while it continues, which is a thing that all men ſhould do, but ſo rare in the world

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as that it is wonder the Lord hath ſo patiently continued his louing voice, when men ſcoffe at it and will not heare. The Lord hath and doth ſend his prophets amongſt vs, as he did among the Iewes, riſing vp early, and ſending them which with all earneſtneſſe doe proclaime the dangerous euent that ſhall follow vpon prophaneneſſe, neglect & contempt of Gods word, breaking of his Sabboth, railing, wrathfulneſſe, whordome, wantonnes, couetouſneſſe, theeuing, oppreſſing, ſlandering, lying, and the like. Yet how many run on in theſe euils preſumtuouſly, ruſhing like the horſe into the battaile with an vnreaſonable boldneſſe not fearing any danger, and ſhutting their eares againſt theſe reproofes as the deafe Adder doth, that they may not be moued by them to amendment. Ah, how contrary is this to redeeming the time. If any man haue hitherto loſt the ſeaſon, let him now grow wiſe, and euen at this time turne to God, and beg power to forſake theſe ſins. How often & how earneſtly are men exhorted to all good works by the continuall

voice of God ſpeaking vnto thē by his ſeruants: to read the word of god daily: to pray priuately: to meditate vpon the word: to watch ouer their daies: & to cal themſelues to a reckning euery day for the faults cōmitted in the day. Yet who regards this voice, who marks theſe exhortations, wher is one that hath inioyned himſelfe to ſome conſtācy in praying, reading, and the forenamed duties? This is to ſleep in harueſt, a moſt fooliſh practice & vnwiſe, wherfore whilſt there is yet a little time left, whilſt we haue the light, let vs walk in it, that we be not ouertaken with darknes. He that hath not yet begun, let him bee ſorry that he hath put it off ſo late, and now ſet foot into theſe waies of God whilſt God ſets out his word as a candle to direct him, & as his hand to lead him by. The promiſes of God are in like ſort publiſhed amongſt vs. Happines is held vp as a reward of all true hearted chriſtians, and the crowne of life is propoſed to thoſe which are ſound and faithfull members of Ieſus Chriſt. And yet as though all were ſure to get it, or it

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wer not worth ſeeking by any, the moſt men flatter themſelues in their ſins, and will needs promiſe theſe good things to thēſelues, when they haue no aſſurance or proofe out of gods word, wherby to lay claim or title to them. This is a greeuous & a dāgerous neglecting of time. And if any haue not yet made ſure work this way, let him euen now ſet about it whilſt the word as a touchſtone is before him, by which he may try himſelf, & which will make him ſuch a one as he ſhould be, if he will ſtriue to follow it, and pray for abilitie to be ruled by it. So then whilſt God holds out his benefits and ſtands with his armes open to accept vs, let vs take his benefits, and be perſwaded to come vnto him in good earneſt, let it be too late to trauaile when midnight ſhall cōme in ſtead of noone day. This is the firſt and cheefeſt oportunitie of getting good, namely, to ioine with the goſpell & follow it with our endeuours and prayers by which it ſhal be made effectuall vnto vs. The ſecond opportunitie of getting good is in time of youth and health, whilſt the vigor &

ſtrength of the body and mind is fit for labour and capable of inſtruction. And *Salomon* in his booke of penance, *viz.*
Eccleſ.12.1 *Eccleſiaſtes*, bids *remember thy Creatour in the dayes of thy youth, before the euill daies come.* Theſe daies of youth and health are good daies when hee which wil vſe them, hath his memory ſtedfaſt to call to minde his euill waies that he may bewaile them, and to treaſure vp good inſtructions & promiſes that may guide and comfort him, when the lims will ioyne with the mind, and the mind hath the body as a fit inſtrumēt to ſeek the kingdome of heauen, if a man will addreſſe himſelfe vnto it; but the dayes of old age and ſicknes faile much of the commodious fitnes for good. The memory is cracked, the head and vnderſtanding is weak, & eſpecially the time of ſicknes is ſo filled with paine, ſo ſhaken with diſtractions, and incumbred with greefes & ſorrows, that one is nothing fit to repent, or pray, or heare, or to do any ſuch thing. Now when a man in the prime of his daies and in the fulneſſe of his health, will giue himſelfe

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to ſeeke heauen, will heare the word, & meditate vpon it, & apply it to himſelf, will confeſſe his ſins, and force himſelfe to bewaile them, will pray to God for good things, and ſet the whole courſe of his life in a right frame, he hath well taken the opportunitie, & he ſhall haue reſt in his latter dayes, much quiet and contentment, at leaſt, much ſtrength & aſsiſtance in his ſickneſſe, becauſe hee hath ſomthing in ſtore againſt the time of want. But alas, how doe the common ſort of men bewray their monſtrous folly in this behalfe? What more common then that ſottiſh & brutiſh ſpeech, at leaſt ſuch ignorant and prophane thoughts, men will repent when they be old, and cry God mercie when they feel themſelues ſick, & amend all when they be ready to go out of the world. And fooliſh man, thou knoweſt not whether thou ſhalt dye ſuddainly, whether thou ſhalt haue thy wits and ſences, or whether thou ſhalt haue power of heart to make the leaſt colour of repentance in thoſe extremities. How many haue died ſuddainly? How many ſottiſhly? And

yet how do men for all theſe warnings defer the beſt buſines, namely, the work of repentance & turning to God, which will require the whole ſtrength of the ſoule, to the worſt and moſt craſie time of ſickneſſe or old age? As if a priſoner at what time a man was offring him a pardon, and calling vpon him to take it ſome good ſpace beefore the Aſsiſes, ſhould ſay: Nay, let me alone, I will not looke after my pardon till immediately before I am to come before the Iudge. This were a moſt fond part, eſpecially, if it were ſo, ỹ the theef knew not whether or no the next day ſhould bee the day of his arraignement: ſo the caſe ſtands betwixt the Lord and vs. If any man therefore haue beene ſo little carefull of his owne eternall good, as to put off repentance and conuerſion till that dead time, or doth foſter any ſuch harmefull conceit in his heart, let him now caſt it out, & now that he hath his health and ſtrength, vpon better deliberation take in hand this work. Be not ſo extreemely mad, as to giue more time to the diuell, then to God, eſpecially to

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giue the principal time. He were a fooliſh trauailer that would willingly gallop al the day quite cõtrary to his way, & being told of it would anſwere, when it drawes towards Sun-ſet I will turne into the right way. Why bee men thus blockiſh for their ſoules, that knowing themſelues to be out of the way of life, will yet of purpoſe deferre to ſet their feete into the right path till ſickneſſe or age, when the ſun of their life is at the point of ſetting. Ah, let our prouerbe teach vs more wit: Make hay while the Sun ſhines. Turne, turne, whilſt thou haſt health and ſtrength, vſe all to get repentance & ſaluation. The laſt cheef opportunitie of getting good, is, when a man hath company, and is in the ſocietie of ſome godly wiſe man, able to giue ſound counſell and direction, able to anſwere all doubts, obiections, and ſcruples of ones minde; now there is a fit opportunitie to grow in wiſdome, to be reſolued of all doubts, and to ſeeke direction. So then a man ought not to ſuffer baſhfulnes, or other folliſh matters to put by that good communicati-

on whereby he might enrich his ſoule. It is a ſpeciall fauour of God that anie man can come where his ſeruants are, that haue excellent gifts, and hee doth depriue himſelfe of much good that wil not ſeeke to benefit himſelfe by them. When the woman of Samaria perceiued Chriſt to be a Prophet, ſhe propoſed her doubt vnto him albeit he was a ſtranger. When *Iohn* Baptiſt might be come to, the Publicans & ſinners came and asked what they ſhould do. Whilſt the Iayler had *Paul* in his keeping, he came to aske that needefull queſtion: What ſhall I doe to be ſaued? So if there be any man whoſe heart is perplexed with ſome doubt, or ouerburdened with ſome temptation, or ouermaſtered by ſome ſin, it is a part of good diſcretion for ſuch a one to go and ſeek the aduice of ſome able Chriſtian or wiſe man, before that eyther himſelfe be too far gone, or he want the opportunitie of ſuch a councellor or helper. Theſe be three ſpeciall occaſions of obtaining good to a mans own ſoule from things without him. In all which to take

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the time is a moſt commendable point of wiſedome, but to be negligent is ſuch folly as *Salomon* reproues whē he ſaith: *That a foole hath a price in his hand to get wiſdome, but hee wants a heart.* Oh that men would beware of this hartleſneſſe, and take heed of looſing their price, by which they might get wiſdome.

Now I come to ſpeake of the occaſions of doing good. And theſe are eyther in others or in our ſelues. Firſt, in others, and that for their ſoule & body. Sometimes a man ſhall finde a kinde of tractableneſſe in thoſe with whom hee hath to deale that their ears ſtand open, and they are readie to drink in an exhortation or reproof by reaſon of ſome affliction that is vpon them, or ſome need they haue of our help, or ſuch like occaſion. Here is time for a kinde and ſound admonition, then a man ought in all loue, and yet with all plainneſſe to follow the occaſion, ſtriking (as our prouerbe is) whilſt the iron is hot, ſpeaking when he ſees him in the melting vaine, ready to take all wel, and in good part. And ſo *Elihu* notes, that when a man

is brought to his death bed,& to abhor all worldly delights, then his eares are bored,and then there is work for an interpreter. Before the bones clattered, and the mourners looked for the funeral,an interpreter was deſpiſed,but now his words are obſerued. Thus a man may doe much good to his neighbours or ſeruants ſoule, if he waite for a time when he is fit to receiue admonition,& then giue it him,as the husbandman in dry weather waytes for a ſhower of raine,and then ſets in his plow. Againe, for the body,ſometimes one ſhall meet with one that hath true need, that is in diſtreſſe for his bodily eſtate, and doth indeed want reliefe. This is an occaſion and fit time to ſhew liberalitie. Now a man muſt open his purſe,and be ready to giue freely, I meane not, that euery time a man meetes a beggar he ſhould be giuing (for to thoſe a man ſhould not giue, but in the very extremitie of neceſsity)but if our brother hath beene afflicted by any loſſe through fire, or ſuch like(that he do not make himſelfe needy by idleneſſe, but it comes vpon him

him by ſome hand of God)here is an obiect fit for mercy,& here one may be ſeaſonably liberal,here is an altar,offer the Sacrifice of almes vpon it,which is a thing wherwith God is well pleaſed. Some other time,ſparing may bee more fit,but now is a ſeaſon to be more free of gift and open handed. There is an occaſion of doing good offred in others,wherein I haue named theſe two particulars,that euery man might accordingly take notice of other like. Thē there is alſo occaſion of doing good offred in ones ſelfe,whether by ſome outward thing that befals him,or by ſome inward ſtirring of the minde and affections. As outwardly when a time comes in,wherin we haue receiued ſome more ſpeciall benefit,this ſhould prouoke vs to more thankfulnes by remembrance of the benefit. Thus this time of Chriſts natiuitie ſhould(if any way)be celebrated,that it might turne to an occaſion of more hartie thankſgiuing,& more true obedience vnto Chriſt that gaue himſelf for our ſins,and tooke our nature vpon him that in it hee might beare our iniquities

quities. So when we be in the enioying of gods creatures, whilſt we be eating & drinking or ſuch like, here is a ſpeciall ſeaſon to lift vp the heart to God, & to kindle a flame of praiſe by this fewell, that our thanks might be ſo much the more earneſt, by how much we haue a more preſent feeling of Gods mercie, and doe euen taſt how good he is. On the other ſide a man is ſomtimes preſſed with a ſore croſſe & affliction that pincheth his ſoule, here is a very fit occaſion of humbling ones ſelfe, and examining ones heart. For in theſe afflictions god cals to humiliation for the moſt part, which dutie being performed after a man may reioyce in his affliction. But whiles the burden of the croſſe is heauie here is a notable meanes to further one in the work of humiliation, and if one can take the time when God ſmites, he may (at leaſt he ought) cauſe his hart to ſtoup before him with more eaſe, then when he was at more eaſe, for his body. Againe, ſomtimes a man hath a more inward ſtirring of his affections which he cannot haue at an other time.

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This muſt be followed, greedily taken, ſometimes at the ſermon, or vpon ſome other occaſion, a man hearing or thinking of his ſin, and the puniſhment due thereunto, haue a kind of pricking in his heart, and ſome touch of remorſe within him, his conſciẽce begins to tel him that all is not well, & he growes to ſome orderly concluſion: Sure I wil now be ſorrie for this fault, & amend it. Now if one will follow this motion, & go after god when he cals (for this is one of his inward callings) and not ſhoulder it out with fond mirth, but nouriſh it by a plain confeſsion of his ſin to God, & an harty begging of grace & ſtrength from him to do that which he now ſees he ſhould doe; this will come to godly ſorrow, and ſo to repentance, but elſe if he choake it and quench it, it will vaniſh, & the hart wil be more hard frozen in the dregs of ſin. So that if there bee any whoſe heart at this time at the ſpeaking of theſe words, whoſe ſoule ſmites him for his ſwearing, lying, ſabboth breaking, whordome, drũkennes, gameming, couetouſnes, railing, or the like ſin, let him when

he is gone out of the Chruch, caſt him-ſelfe downe in the preſence of God, confeſſe this his ſinne or ſins freely without diſſembling, labour to be more ſorrowfull for them then euer he was, and pray to God to pul him out of this mire. This if he doe, he ſhall take the time, he ſhall be a conuert, the Lord will receiue him, as the vnthriftie prodigall ſon was receiued, & by redeeming the time he ſhal finde redemption to his ſoule. But if he deſpiſe this admonition of god, his ſoule ſhal be more feared then before, his hart ſhall be deliuered to a greater hardneſſe and ſenceleſneſſe then euer before, and ſo be further off from repentance & life. But alas, the frantick dealing of men in this caſe is too palpable, and to be wondred at, when Gods word ſtrikes vpon them, when they feele the keenneſſe of it, when the threatnings haue cut ſo that they ſmart for it; then they run to dicing, carding, drinking, dancing, &c. as it wer of ſet purpoſe to driue away the ſpirit of God that was comming towards them to heale their ſoule. None is ſo mad to take ſuch courſes for his body, that whē he

he feels the ſore to ſmart, then to run frō the Phiſition, and couer it ouer with a clout, or ſtriue to forget it: yet for their ſoules a number deale ſo ſenceleſly in this thing as much as in any other, verifying that name which the holy Ghoſt hath giuen vnto them, when he terms thē mad men. For it is a property peculiar to a mad man that feeling paine, he wil hate the Phiſition, & run away from him that would help. Oh, that thoſe of vs which haue hitherto beene ſo mad would returne now to their right minds, & to god to be healed. Againe, ſometimes a mans heart is ſtirred vp with an inward and ſecret reioycing or gladnes. Then ſaith S. *Iames*. *If any man be merry let him ſing Pſalmes*. Now he ſhall do it with a cheerfull courage indeed. And therefore *Dauid* would in ſuch a caſe riſe at midnight to ſing a Pſalme rather then hee would looſe the ſeaſon whē it would reliſh with him ſo well. Sometimes alſo, a man or a woman ſhall feele a ſecret penſiueneſſe growing ouer his heart, ſo that it euen melts as the ground that thawes after a froſt, & he could euen weep abundantly, Iames. 5. 13

teares offer themſelues in a full meaſure. Here is an excellent occaſion of renuing ones repentance. Now whatsoeuer be ones company, whatsoeuer bee the matter in hand, except it be of abſolute neceſsitie, let him leaue it of, and betake him to his chamber or ſome ſecret place, let him fal on his knees, now let him opē his mouth and acknowledge his ſins againſt himſelfe, giuing vent to his greefe, and turning all to Godly ſorrow, whatſoeuer the occaſion was at firſt. Thus if any body doe, his repentance ſhall receiue a notable increaſe. But if hee paſſe it ouer, his heart will not anſwere his deſire an other time. Furthermore, ſometimes a mans heart is earneſtly moued with ſome hungry deſire to inioy ſome grace of God, and great longing after ſome chriſtian vertue. Now let him in the heat & flame of his deſire addreſſe himſelfe to prayer. Then one ſhall ſend vp ſuch peircing cries, and giue ſuch a loud knock againſt the gates of Chriſts mercy, that he can not chuſe but heare, and ſend one back with an almes, as it were. Thus hee redeemes the time: but elſe his deſires will

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be ſo cold and chill at an other time, that hee ſhall ſcarce thruſt a petition out of his lips, & then theſe drop downe at his feet, and do him little good. And thus in euery other through the turning of our affections, we muſt follow Gods ſpirit, yea, or nature when it leads vs, wiſely turning all to ſpirituall vſes. And thus you may perceiue what it is to redeeme the time, and how it may be attained. Now let vs come to ſome breife application of the point. Vſe.

Firſt, this point thus explaned meets with a number of impetfections euen in the beſt; & him that is moſt careful of his waies, of which we are now to take notice, and purpoſe amendment, if we haue not hitherto conſidered of them. For this is a fault to which a man (euen in a good meaſure ſpirituall) is ſubiect for want of redeeming the time, that he comes to that lazie paſſe now and then, as he hath nothing to do, nothing where about to ſettle himſelfe. It is a carnall vnſetlednes in a chriſtian to be ſo negligent of his time, as that he ſhuld haue any minute of time which hee knowes not how to beſtow

vpon ſome good and profitable vſe. The Lord offers ſuch a multitude of occaſions to do and receiue good, that if we could with wiſdome take thē, ther is no houre paſſeth vs in which we might not do or get ſome good. And if there be nothing elſe, yet this is ſomething where about he hath good occaſion to be buſied, euen to fal out with himſelf, becauſe he hath nothing (I meane he ſees nothing that hee hath to do. Somtimes if men ſee their ſeruants ſtanding idle & vnbuſied, they can aske thē with a kind of indignatiō? what? Can you find you nothing to doe? And ſure the Lord might come with this queſtion diuers times to vs, and ſay as it is in the parable: *Why ſtand you all the day idle?* asking whether the world were ſo emptie of occaſions, & our ſelues ſo perfectly wel, as that we can find nothing to do? But there is no houre paſſeth vs which we ſhould not finde fit for ſome good thing, if we could catch the opportunitie before it be turned, and did not harme our ſelues for want of diligent redeeming the time. Yet there are other faults of which chriſtians are to be warned. As

to

to begin with the laſt firſt: How many be there that are ſo ſtuffed with worldly buſineſſes, and yet are greedy of more, as that they cannot find leaſure one houre in a day, nay ſcarce in a week, to beſtow vpon reading, praying, meditating or cõferring. Yea, as though time were made for nothing but to ſeeke wealth & tranſitory things, ſo it is the cheefeſt of their care. It appeares that ſuch labor not for conſcience but for gaine, becauſe they cannot break of ordinary labors ſo long, as wel to performe ordinary duties of religion. Many may ſay (with greef inough if they did wel) that their hands are ſo ful of the world, as that they can ſcarce thorow the weeke take the Bible into their hands to read any thing therein, vnleſſe perhaps it be in the church at ſome publique meeting. Thus men which are born to a better inheritance are cõtent to wear out themſelues in the earth, as if they wer to periſh in the earth with other baſer creatures. Here is one fault to be amended then, let no chriſtian beſtow ſo much time in the world, as that he can not find ſufficient to ſeeke heauen & the

things thereof. Then for the matter of ſports, me thinks ſome chriſtians ſhould euen ſhrink before the word of reproofe comes to them, when they may think of ſo many houres ſpent ſuch a day at bowels; ſo many, it may be, the next day in ſhooting; ſo many the third day in ſhouell bord, or the like exerciſes: happily in themſelues not vnlawfull, & when they come to reckning for religious exerciſes, the count comes in very ſlowlie by the minutes or quarters, ſome halfe quarter of an houre or there abouts beſtowed ſuch a day in praying alone, and ſome three or foure dayes after about a quarter of an houre in reading, & (it may be) the next weeke, ſome halfe quarter more in meditation. And thus if the expences of time were written in our bebt bookes, as they be in Gods, we might euen bluſh to read, ſo many items, for pleaſure & ſport, and ſcarce one or two in a ſide for priuate religious exerciſes. Then for our words: May we not hang down our heads with ſhame to think that god made our tongues, and we ſpeak ſcarce one word in an hūdred to his glory. Idle

words

words: euen many of thoſe whom wee are to regard as chriſtians count them no faults, neither come to repēt for them. It was but a word out of the way, ſay they. But this power to ſpeak (being a gift peculiar to men aboue all beaſts) ought to be more preciouſly regarded, then that it ſhould be abuſed for baſe trifles. Then for idle thoughts; who makes queſtion of them almoſt? Alas, we do not remember that God hath ſearching eyes and feirce, which peirce into the depth of ones ſoule. We dream that thoughts are not ſo much, and ſpare our ſelues in our vnthriftines, when we ſhould deale more religiouſly with our ſelues. Laſtly, ſome might be reprooued for too long lying in bed, & ſpending more houres in ſlugging or ſleeping, then health & ſtrength doe require. Many perhaps will thinke that it is left to their owne pleaſure, and that the Preacher is too buſie, if he take vpon him to teach them when to riſe, as though it were no fault to ouer-ſleepe themſelues. Indeed ſome old and ſickly mens bodies muſt take it when they may, but for the greateſt part of men, if they

knew what good the firſt halfe houre of the early morning ſpent in religious exerciſes would bring them, they would not loue ſleepe ſo well, as for it to neglect them. It is well ſaid: *Hee that ſeekes me early ſhall finde me*, and it may well be literally vnderſtood. Therfore brethren, there is none but may ſee a fault in himſelfe in theſe reſpects, ſome or al of them, and happy is he that reſolues to mend it. Therefore if you will take good counſell, doe this when you come home. Thinke, alaſſe, if time muſt be reckned for, & ſhould be redeemed; How far am I behinde hand with God, that (what for ſleepe, what for play, what for idle babling, what for vaine thoughts, and exceſſiue worldlineſſe) I cannot make a good account of the fourtith, yea, of the hundreth part of my time? And then greeue becauſe thou haſt beene ſuch an vnthrift of time, & now begin carefully to ſpare before all be gone. But now here is a reproofe more ſharp for ſome others that are not willing to heare of that eare, tell them they muſt not ſpend a whole day, or a whole night in playing & ſporting.

What

What not at Chriſtmas, (ſay they?) why you are too preciſe: well, but yet vouchſafe to conſider a little what God ſpeaks. Thou ſayeſt: this is too much preciſenes. and ſo ſaith the world; but the Apoſtle bids to walke preciſely or warily, redeeming the time. And hee that will take time to card or dice, and to vſe lawfull recreations immoderately (I meane ſo as to be at his play the greater part of the day, and it may be ſome, if not the moſt of the night too) ſhall pay full dearely for it. Either he muſt repent, & vndo this with much greef and ſorrow of heart, or els he muſt ſmart for it hereafter worſe in hell. I would not deale ouer ſharply with thee: but take Gods louing admonition, and let him haue one tenth part of the foure & twentie houres, yea more a good deale then ſo, now that thou haſt more leaſure then ordinarie.

And here is yet a kinde of people that are to be more rigorouſly handled, ſuch as are all gameſters, that ſpend no one houre waking but vpon pleaſure. The world cals them ſcatter-goods, and the Lord will call them ſcatter-houres, that

do misspend both goods & houres. Such (let them think of themselues how they will) as doe make gameing the greatest part (if not all) of their occupation, must bee content to heare that they haue no portion in heauen, as they can keepe no portion in earth. How can one haue treasure in heauen, that neuer laid vp any there. If God hate a gamester, so that he wil not giue him good cloths to his back (now he hath threatned that he shall be clothed with rags) he wil much lesse afford him a seate in heauen. And howsoeuer for a time they may ruffle it out, & be clad better then their more laborious neighbors, yet this trade wil surely vndo them. For they haue brought this perill vpon themselues, that either God must not be true or they must not be rich, he must forfaite his truth, or they their goods; besides their name and soule: wherefore let such as haue hitherto giuen their dayes to such an vnsanctified, an inordinate course, surcease from the practise of their lewdnes, & both in conscience for their soules sake, & in discretiō for their goods sake, resolue to become better husbands

of

of time, leaſt their gameing on earth bring beggery to their latter dayes, and damnation to their ſoules for euer.

Laſtly, let all good chriſtians be admoniſhed to make precious account of their time, and with much carefulneſſe to take the ſeaſons and opportunities of God, according as they haue heard it is their dutie. Chriſtians either indeede purpoſe to learne, or elſe make a ſhew of ſuch a purpoſe when they come to church. Ah, that we might all learne this thrift, and practiſe it as wee haue heard. Begin to day, and hold on ſtill, now is a time of remembring the moſt admirable work of Chriſts incarnation, when he was made fleſh of the Virgin, to purge vs from ſin, and ſaue vs from wrath by the ſhedding of his bloud, and ſuffrings which he endured in his fleſh. Giue not all (ah, why ſhould we giue any of it?) this time to play, cheefly to bezelling, ſurfeting, or wantonnes, but take ſome ſpace to conſider of the greatnes of this benefite, and to be thankfull proportionablie therunto. I would I might hope to preuaile with any by this exhortation, but howſoeuer

euer it is needfull to be ſpoken, that none may haue occaſion to pretend ignorance, you ſee or might ſee your duties in this beehalfe, and in practiſing the ſame ſhall finde the benefite of it. But fooles will ſcorne admonition, and thoſe that haue accuſtomed themſelues to luſt, will not bee intreated to pull their necks from out their hard yoake, and to ſerue a better Maſter. Nay, ſo fooliſh are a number, that they thinke to do Chriſt great honour in ſpending the day whereon they imagine that he was borne, and ſome few that follow it in more then ordinary riot and ſinfull exceſſe: as though he were a God that loued iniquitie, and were delighted with drinking, and ſwilling, and gameing, and ſwearing, and ſurfeting, and all diſorder.

But thoſe that know Chriſt, know full well that hee is not pleaſed with ſuch prancks. Wherefore if wee will ſpend a day to Chriſt, ſpend it more religiouſly and ſoberly then all other dayes, not more prophanely and luxurioufly. Wee ſhould neither forget his birth, but when wee obſerue ſome ſpe-

ciall time of remembring it, ſhew that wee remember his goodneſſe by doing good, more honour to his name, not by committing more rebellion againſt him.

And to conclude, as at this time ſo at all times, let all men that would haue their ſoules well furniſhed with inward ſubſtance, play the good husbands in taking time and opportunitie whenſoeuer we find any fit occaſion of getting or doing good, in our ſelues or others, let it not ſlip, but lay hold vpon it, and vſe it. It is ioyfull to thinke (if we could think of it ſereouſly) what commoditie this thrift would bring, how much knowledge and godlineſſe might hee get that would keepe his tongue and heart carefully to good matters? What a large treaſure of good workes might hee haue, that would bee ready whenſoeuer his neighbours neceſsity called for helpe, to ſtretch out his hand for his reliefe? And when hee ſaw him fit for an admonition would wiſely beſtow it vpon him? How full of grace ſhould his old age and ſickneſſe bee, that would giue his

his health to God, and his firſt yeares to the ſeruice of his ſoule? How great acquaintance might hee get in the pallace of wiſdome, that would come to her at her firſt call, and enter ſo ſoone as the doores were ſet open? How many ſins might a man leaue, and how much power ſhould he get ouer all ſinne, that when his heart ſmites him, would turne to God by prayer and confeſsion? What great grace would affliction bring if a man would ſettle himſelfe to humiliation, and gageing his heart in time of affliction? How much thanckefulneſſe might hee haue that would lift vp his heart to God in the fruition of euerie bleſsing? How many feruent prayers might he ſtore vp in heauen, that would not fore-ſlow time, when hee feeles his deſires earneſt? How comfortably might wee weepe ouer Chriſt, and how plentifully, that would take the tide of teares, and turne all penſiueneſſe to this vſe? And how many ſweete and chearefull Pſalmes might a Chriſtian ſing, if hee would turne all his mirth into a Pſalme, and offer it vp to God? Oh, what a large

large increaſe of grace would this care bring? How ſhould his ſoule thriue that would bee thus husbandlie? Surely as the common ſpeech hath commended a little Land well tilled, beefore much more ground that is careleſſie dreſſed: So the weaker meanes with this care, would bee more auaileable to inrich the heart, then are the ſtrongeſt without it.

It is not the greatneſſe of ones liuing that makes one rich, but the good imploying, and wary husbanding of it. So it is not the greatnes of the meanes, but the diligent redeeming of time, to make vſe of the meanes, that makes the ſoule wealthy. But if great meanes ioyne with great care, the increaſe will bee ſo much the more large, as a large liuing with good husbandry. But alas, hence comes it that ſome in the ſtore of all good meanes of Saluation are very Beggars and Bankrupts, beecauſe of their negligence to take the time and fit ſeaſon. They let paſſe all good opportunities, and care not for any occaſion for the Soule, and how can their Soule thriue?

Where-

Wherefore let euery true hearted Christian learne this wisedome and practise it, as euer hee desires to store his soule with that wealth which will make him glorious in the eyes of God, and much set by euen in heauen among the Angels. And thus much for this time, and this duty of redeeming the time.

FINIS.

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